

The Cornerstone

The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Psalms 118:22-23

VOLUME LXIV NUMBER 38

September 24, 2026



The Ministry of Hospitality:

The Importance of Extending Hospitality

This week in worship, we continue our mini worship series: *The Ministry of Hospitality* by turning toward two foundational stories of welcome — **Abraham and Sarah's open-hearted reception of three travelers in *Genesis 18***, and **Jesus' teaching in *Matthew 25***, where He reveals that every act of compassion offered to another is, in truth, offered to Him.

These passages remind us that hospitality is not merely a social courtesy. It is a spiritual practice or spiritual initiative. A way of life. A ministry that reflects the very heart of God as we become the hands and feet of Jesus.

In *Genesis 18*, Abraham sees strangers approaching in the heat of the day. Before he knows who they are, before he understands the significance of their visit, he *runs* to meet them. He bows low. He offers water, rest, shade, bread, and a feast. Abraham's welcome is not cautious or calculated — it is wholehearted. It is generous. It is immediate. It is filled with joy and excitement. In that simple act of hospitality, Abraham and Sarah find themselves hosting the presence of God.

Jesus echoes this truth in *Matthew 25* when He says, “*I was hungry and you gave me food...I was a stranger and you welcomed me.*” The ministry of hospitality is not abstract. It is embodied in the ways we meet people’s needs — food, presence, compassion, dignity, belonging. Jesus makes it clear that when we extend hospitality to others, we are encountering Him. We are participating in His ministry of compassion. We are becoming vessels of His grace.

These scriptures invite us to reflect on our own patterns of welcome — in our homes, in our daily lives, and especially in our church.

Hospitality is not only about offering a meal or opening a door. It is about creating space where people feel seen, valued, and safe. It is about noticing what someone needs — rest, encouragement, prayer, connection — and responding with Christ-like generosity. It is about cultivating environments where strangers become friends and where every person senses that they belong.

As a congregation, we have the opportunity to ask: **How does our hospitality draw people into life-giving ministry? Where are we already offering welcome well? Where might God be inviting us to deepen our practice of holy hospitality?**

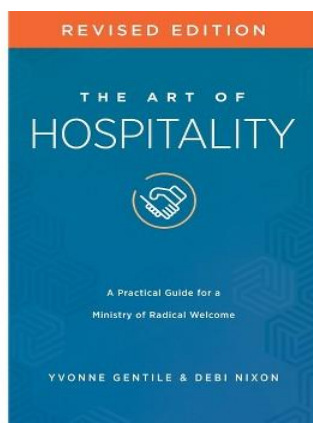
Perhaps it is in the way we greet newcomers. Perhaps it is in how we listen to one another’s stories. Perhaps it is in the ministries we support, the meals we serve, the compassion we extend, or the openness we show to those who are searching for hope.

Hospitality is not a program. It is a posture. It is the way we embody Christ’s love in every interaction. It is the ministry that turns ordinary moments into sacred encounters.

As we gather this Sunday for worship we will explore “**The Importance of Extending Hospitality.**” May we come ready to imagine how God is calling us to be a church where welcome is not simply offered — it is felt. A church where compassion is not an idea — it is practiced. A church where every person who walks through our doors senses the warmth of Christ’s presence and desires to come back for more.

May our hospitality continue to be a doorway into life-giving ministry, a reflection of God’s generous heart, and a witness to the transforming love of Jesus Christ. See you at church, in person or online.

Jill



The Art of Hospitality

FIVE-WEEK STUDY

Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.

Sept. 22, 29, Oct. 6, 13, 27

Note: not on Oct. 20

Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.

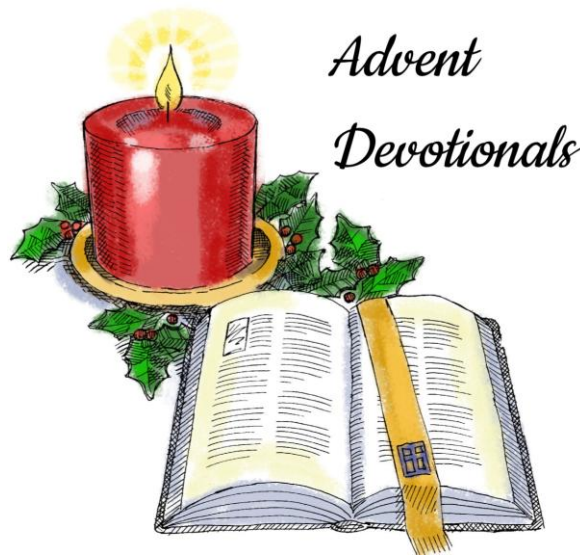
Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7, 14, 28

Note: not on Oct. 21



LOOKING AHEAD - Mark Your Calendars:

- **TWO (2) Community Services at 10:00 a.m.**
October 4th - *World Communion Sunday*
November 1st – *All Saints Sunday*
 - **Annual Church Conference at 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**
October 31st – FUMC is the host location for 12 churches. If you can assist with hosting, please let the office know.
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It's not too early to get your mental wheels in motion! Advent will soon be here! Once again, we are soliciting contributions to our very personal advent booklet. It's not hard to do. Just a Bible verse, a short anecdote or some thoughts, poetry, favorite hymn-just about anything that might be inspiring.

How has God touched your life? Please give it some thought, and I am certain you could share your experience with your church family!

I am here to help! Diane Maher. 732-513-8413

Dianeserine07712@yahoo.com

Deadline for submissions: November 8



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH INVITATION
TO
AN AFTERNOON TEA

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER
REBECCA BLONSKI
FOUNDER OF MADONNA HOUSE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH AT 3:00 PM

Madonna House ministers to poor, destitute, and underprivileged infants, children, and women who live in our local communities. All clothing, juvenile furnishings, toys, infant formula, diapers, and small household necessities are provided **free of charge**.

Refreshments will be served after Rebecca's presentation.
Please kindly RSVP if you will be in attendance to Diane Maher
732- 513-8413.



Please consider donating a child's Christmas toy when
attending the tea.

Madonna House is located at 1401 Seventh Ave., Neptune, NJ



**ONE DAY ONLY - WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026
SHOP 8AM - 11PM**

DONATE \$5 AND ENJOY:

- **25% OFF** DISCOUNT SHOPPING PASS*
- **REGISTER TO WIN** A \$100 BOSCOV'S GIFT CARD
One Winner at every Bosco's store

Friends Helping Friends

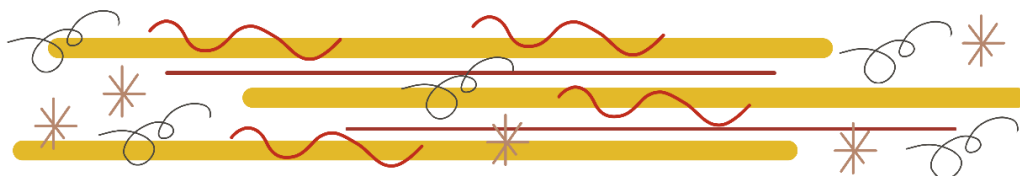
The UWIF is now selling \$5 passes for shopping at Bosco's (in person or online) to raise funds for mission projects. Please see any UWIF member or stop in the church office to purchase a pass.



Bishop's Days on the District

Bishop Moore-Koikoi is making a visit to our district! Please save the date; more details are coming soon.

Raritan Shore- November 13



BOOK CLUB

Join the newly formed FUMCO book club - the first Wednesday of every month at 12:30 p.m. October's book is *The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife* by Anna Johnston.

A zany case of mistaken identity allows a lonely old man one last chance to be part of a family in this warm, life-affirming novel. Bittersweet and remarkably perceptive, *The Borrowed Life of*

Frederick Fife is a hilarious, feel-good, clever novel about forgiveness, redemption, second chances and finding family. *Amazo*



Please sign up to be a fellowship host. There are signup sheets in Fellowship Hall. Please contact Bonnie McNamara with any questions, 732-216-1511.

NOTE: This year there are changes in fellowship hosting. It is the hope that these changes will give everyone the opportunity to host no matter which service they are attending.

Part 1: Set up will be done by Bonnie McNamara unless she asks someone to cover.

Part 2: Hosting: Bring 1 quart of whole milk. Arrive in the kitchen by 10:20 a.m. and serve.

Part 3: Clean up: Arrive in the kitchen by 10:55 a.m. to clean up.

More detailed instruction can be found in the kitchen in the fellowship closet.

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2026 CROP WALK

Sunday, October 18, 2026

46th Annual Walk

CROP is a program of Church World Service working to combat hunger within the local community and world community. The annual **Red Bank CROP Walk** organized by ecumenical and interfaith congregations lets us walk as a family in our mission to combat hunger.

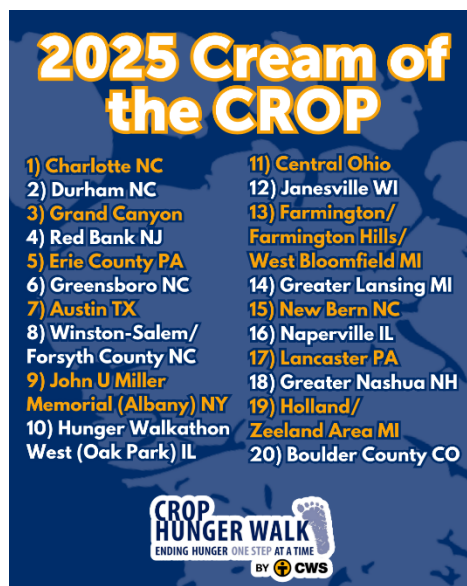
Last year the **Red Bank CROP Walk** was fourth in the nation among 500 walks and raised a record \$143,000 and collected 15,000 lbs. of food that was shared among the local partner food pantries. Our church raised a total of \$1300+.

This year the **Red Bank CROP walk** celebrates its **46th anniversary**. Once again walkers from area churches, schools, & civic groups will join together in the walk against hunger with a goal of \$145,000.

If you would like to contribute to this year's CROP walk, checks should be made payable to **CWS/Red Bank CROP Walk** and given to Jeff Danielson or mailed to the church. On-line donations can be made at events.crophungerwalk.org website-click on the **Browse a full list of teams** button, click on **First United Methodist Church-Oakhurst** and follow the prompts.

There will also be a table set-up during coffee hour starting **September 27th** with resources and materials. If you would like to join this year's walk, walker envelopes will be available if you choose not to register online.

Over the past 40-years, the congregation has been most generous in its support of the CROP walk ministry. On behalf of all the walkers throughout the decades, thank you for your continued support!



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|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1) Charlotte NC | 11) Central Ohio |
| 2) Durham NC | 12) Janesville WI |
| 3) Grand Canyon | 13) Farmington/
Farmington Hills/ |
| 4) Red Bank NJ | West Bloomfield MI |
| 5) Erie County PA | 14) Greater Lansing MI |
| 6) Greensboro NC | 15) New Bern NC |
| 7) Austin TX | 16) Naperville IL |
| 8) Winston-Salem/
Forsyth County NC | 17) Lancaster PA |
| 9) John U Miller | 18) Greater Nashua NH |
| Memorial (Albany) NY | 19) Holland/
Zeeland Area MI |
| 10) Hunger Walkathon
West (Oak Park) IL | 20) Boulder County CO |



Conference & Other UMC Opportunities



VOTING INFORMATION



Get prepared for midterm elections

Resources for engaging in the midterm elections with faith and purpose are available from the United Methodist Board of Church and Society. Information about voter education, voter engagement, and voter protection are provided free online. *UM News*

[Learn more](#)

[See resources](#)

GBCS Voting Rights Learning Opportunities

Book study: The General Board of Church & Society will host a Zoom study on the book *Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America* by Ari Berman on **Oct. 16, 23 & 30** from **1-2:30pm**. [Register.](#)



Webinars: GBCS will host a timely two-part webinar series examining the challenges facing our democracy and the practical issues facing voting and civic participation.

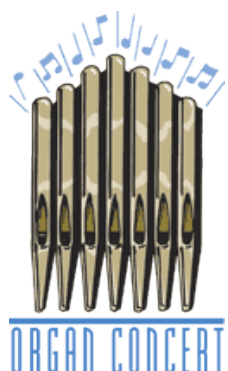
Part I - Beyond the Ballot: Oct. 1 | 1-2:15pm

Voice, Representation, and the Work of Building a Strong Democracy [Register here.](#)

Part II - Democracy on the Ballot: Oct. 2 | 1-2:15pm

Voting Rights, the 2026 Midterm Elections, and What We Can Do [Register here.](#)

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Organist Roger Sayer Brings *Interstellar* Film Score to Haddonfield

On **Friday, Oct. 16 at 7pm**, Haddonfield UMC will host internationally acclaimed British organist Roger Sayer for the annual Mi Wha Lee Memorial Organ Recital. The performance will take place at Haddonfield UMC's sanctuary and will be [livestreamed.](#)

Sayer was the original organ soloist for Hans Zimmer's iconic *Interstellar* soundtrack which he will perform alongside major classical masterworks on Haddonfield UMC's pipe organ.

Free admission - no tickets required!

Pen Pal Ministry

If it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully." Romans 12:8

Debbie Eckert (Old First) has spoken with the leaders at Keswick, and they are ready to begin the Pen Pal Ministry now entitled Connected. This is a letter program to encourage men and women going through the addiction program at America's Keswick.

Here is how it works:

- Write to either a man or a woman.
- Put it in an unsealed envelope with the gender for whom it is written.
- Use only your first name (no last name please).
- Indicate if you are from FUMCO or Old First UMC so the recipient can respond.
- Put your notes of encouragement in the basket marked "Connected" just outside the sanctuary.
- Your notes will be delivered on Fridays.
- Notes back to us will be put in the basket as well so don't forget to check the basket.

Wondering what to write in your note?

They are individuals who need encouragement and support. They are folks probably missing home and need to be reminded of God's love for them. They may or may not have family, so this is a wonderful way to help them know that they have a spiritual family.

Any questions, call Debbie Ecker: 908-489-7619 or eckertpartygirl@hotmail.com





Worship

18th Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

Counters: Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John Montgomery

Greeter: Pamela Lynch

Usher: Kitty Amato

Acolyte: Bonnie McNamara

Lay Reader: Steve Skoulas

Fellowship Hosts: Robert Scott, Greg Scott

Altar Flowers

Given in loving memory of Stuart A. Serine by
Diane & Joy.

Given in honor of all first responders by Bonnie
McNamara.

WORLD Communion

19th Sunday after Pentecost
October 4, 2026

Counters: Patty Aria, John Montgomery, Judy Gorra

Greeter: Ruth Sheckler

Ushers: Greg Scott, Robert Scott

Acolyte: Kayleigh Becker

Lay Reader: Judy Gorra

Fellowship Host: Bonnie McNamara

Altar Flowers

Given in loving memory of Marie Meadows by
her daughter, Sharron.

Given in honor of Kelly Pettit's birthday by
Hudson, Owen, & the Henderson family.



COMMUNITY JAVA WITH JILL

OCTOBER 27, 10 a.m.

Join Pastor Hubbard-Smith and friends at the
Blue Swan Diner for an informal gathering to
share conversation and perhaps a treat of your
choosing.

**OUR SEPTEMBER COMMUNION OFFERING
BENEFITS THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
OF CAMDEN.**

**Tsedalech, our World Vision Child from Ethiopia,
is sponsored for the month of September by
Kitty Amato.**



Our homebound: Bev Itell, Virginia Haydu, Bob
Sproat, Bertha Ahrens, Carey Carlisle, Priscilla
Smith, Elaine Gould

At home: Carol Steinat

Jersey Shore Care Center: Dave Miller

The Rehab Center at Wedgwood Gardens: Nancy
Burt

Our church family worshipping at a distance:

Barbara Novick, Laura Eble, Jack & Caroline
Chesbro



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

All that I have seen
teaches me to trust the
creator for all I have not
seen. – Ralph Waldo
Emerson



MERCY CENTER

The Outreach Commission thanks you for your continued support of the Mercy Center food bank. Here are the current needs: canned meats, canned fish, beans, lentils, rice, pasta, oats, whole-grain cereals, low-sodium soup, canned fruits, canned vegetables, peanut butter, powdered milk, & nonperishable oils.



COMMUNITY



DINNER

The next **free** community spaghetti dinner will be on **October 18** at 5 p.m. Everyone is invited to Fellowship Hall for a delicious meal and good company.

WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS

Sept. 27-Oct. 3

Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32



The Little Free Pantry



Please think of stocking shelf-stable milk, powdered milk, soup, stew, chili, whole grain cereal, toiletries, hygiene products, baby food, applesauce, canned beans, canned chicken, canned tuna, canned salmon, SPAM, canned ham, canned vegetables, olive oil, canola oil, crackers, dried herbs, spices, canned fruit, dried fruit, granola bars, instant mashed potatoes, meals in a box, nuts, pasta, peanut butter, & rice.

A good idea this week:
Bread

Autumn Poems for Kids



AUTUMN TREES

The trees are kind of pretty
in their autumn gold and brown.
Leaves are bright orange-reddish.
But all will soon fall down.
Then they dry and crackle
as we crunch them with our shoes.
I guess it's time for autumn now
as summer takes a snooze.

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